

**August 5, 2010**

**UTICA, NY**-Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) joined New York State Canal Corporation Director Carmella R. Mantello and other local officials to perform a ceremonial opening of the Utica Harbor Lock and announce the start of dredging in the harbor. The opening of the lock will allow the Corporation's dredge equipment to enter the harbor and begin both navigational and remedial dredging operations.

The Utica Harbor has not been dredged for navigation in 30 years, since 1980. Since then, significant siltation has occurred, causing parts of it to be too shallow for navigation. The dredging will allow use of the harbor for future recreational, tourism and economic development opportunities.

"It is great to see the Department of Transportation and Canal Corp moving forward on this valuable project," **said Arcuri**. "The best way to revitalize our local economy and encourage economic development is by rebuilding our aging transportation infrastructure across the board-including our rail lines, highways and waterways. This project will not only create a number of jobs and give a much needed boost to the Utica Harbor but will also give local business more options for shipping goods reducing their fuel costs and congestion on the roads."

**Canal Corporation Director Carmella R. Mantello stated**, "Today's historic event is a milestone not only for the Canal Corporation, but also for residents, businesses and families of the City of Utica and Oneida County, as we are now one step closer to turning this Harbor and adjacent lands back into productive use, and bringing economic revitalization to the City's waterfront. This opening demonstrates the hard work and dedication of the Canal Corporation employees, who worked tirelessly to repair this lock and pave the way for dredging of the Harbor."

**Assemblywoman RoAnn M. Destito said**, "The Utica Harbor is a beautiful and valuable asset to our region, and its reopening marks a very significant step in the effort to turn it into an attractive waterfront area. It has been an underutilized jewel for many years, and the collaborative effort between business, government, and area residents is transforming it into what will soon be a magnet for businesses, tourists, and boaters and other recreational

enthusiasts."

The extensive rehabilitation of the Utica Harbor Lock included numerous repairs. Most importantly, major repairs to the lift gate structure were undertaken to return it to a state where safe operation can be resumed. Some of these repairs included the replacement of concrete counterweights, tower structure and machinery repairs and alignment, rewiring, and guide wheel repairs. Additional work at the site included: new roof on lock house; painting of the lock house, railings, bull nose, arc lights, machinery cabinets and garage; drainage and landscaping; concrete repairs; new sidewalk construction, parking lot and driveway; and new sanitary system (holding tank).

**New York State Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis said**, "This is a major step in the state and local effort to cleanup and revitalize Utica Harbor. While much remains to be done to achieve the long-term recovery we all desire, this milestone gives us the chance to mark the progress that has been made here."

Harbor Point comprises approximately 140 acres of land located between the Utica Harbor and the Mohawk River. The area was developed for industrial purposes in the mid-1800's and was the site of two manufactured gas plants (MGPs), a coal-fired steam plant, a petroleum storage and distribution facility (Mohawk Valley Oil) and a tar products plant (New York Tar Emulsion Products). Currently, a gas regulator station, electric substation and automotive repair business occupy Harbor Point, along with active maintenance and office facilities for the Canal Corporation. The remainder of the Harbor Point Site is undeveloped land.

Cleanup of environmental impacts on the peninsula and the adjacent Utica Harbor and Mohawk River are being undertaken primarily by National Grid, pursuant to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Record of Decision. The New York Tar Emulsion Products Site has been remediated by Beazer East, Inc and Suit-Kote Corporation. National Grid and the Canal Corporation have an agreement for the remediation of Utica Harbor and certain adjacent dredged sediment disposal areas. The remediation of all of these sites is overseen by NYSDEC, in consultation with the New York State Department of Health.

Upcoming Canal Corporation activities will start with navigational dredging of the harbor neck, followed by remedial dredging of the harbor proper. This dredging is expected to be completed by the end of this year. National Grid will continue remedial activities in accordance with the Record of Decision. Once these efforts are complete certain Canal Corporation parcels will be

ready to be conveyed to the City of Utica local development corporation, in accordance with legislation enacted in 2008.

The New York State Canal System is comprised of four historic waterways, the Erie, the Champlain, the Oswego, and the Cayuga-Seneca Canals. Spanning 524 miles across New York State, the waterway links the Hudson River, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes and the Niagara River with communities rich in history and culture.

The Canal Corporation is a proud sponsor of the 2010 World Canals Conference to be held in Rochester, New York from Sunday, September 19, 2010 through Thursday September 23, 2010. For more information about the World Canals Conference please visit [www.wccrochester.org](http://www.wccrochester.org).

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority (Authority). Since 1992, following State legislation transferring the Canal System from the New York State Department of Transportation to the Authority, Canal operating and maintenance activities have been supported by Thruway toll revenue.

For more information about vacation opportunities and events along the New York State Canal System, please call 1-800-4CANAL4 or visit [www.canals.ny.gov](http://www.canals.ny.gov). For information about boating safety and marine recreation in New York State, visit [www.nysparks.com](http://www.nysparks.com) or call 518-474-0445.

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